

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Previously Presented): An automated warehouse system operated by moving a transfer apparatus along a first rack in a warehouse such that a container is stored in, or retrieved from the first rack, said warehouse system comprising:

at least one container ID tag attached to the container;

an article ID tag attached to an article in the container;

a first reading means for reading the container ID tag without pulling the container out of the first rack, and

a second reading means for reading the article ID tag while pulling the container out of the first rack onto the transfer apparatus.

wherein said first reading means and said second reading means are provided in the transfer apparatus on a side facing the first rack.

2. (Previously Presented): The automated warehouse system of claim 1, further comprising:

a pulling control means for setting a speed of pulling the container at a low speed at a time the article ID tag is read, in comparison with a speed at a time the article ID tag is not read.

3. (Previously Presented) The automated warehouse system of claim 1, wherein the transfer apparatus comprises a stacker crane including:

a truck movable in a movement direction in parallel with the first rack;

a mast provided at the truck;

a hoisting frame vertically movable along the mast; and

transfer means provided at the hoisting frame and movable in the left-right direction perpendicular to the movement direction in the horizontal plane for transferring the container between the first rack and the hoisting frame,

the first reading means is provided in at least one of a left end portion and a right end portion of the hoisting frame on a side facing the first rack for reading the container ID tag, and

the second reading means is provided in at least one of a left upper end portion and a right upper end portion of the hoisting frame such that the container passes under the second reading means by the transfer means.

4. (Previously Presented): The automated warehouse system of claim 3, wherein the first rack is provided on a left side in the movement direction of the hoisting frame, a second rack is provided on a right side in the movement direction of the hoisting frame, the first reading means is provided on both left and right ends of the hoisting frame, and the second reading means is provided on the left upper end and right upper end of the hoisting frame.

5. (Previously Presented): The automated warehouse system of claim 4, wherein container ID tags are provided on each end of the container in the left-right direction based on the state where the container is stocked in the first and the second rack.

6. (Previously Presented): The automated warehouse system of claim 3, wherein space for arranging at least two of the containers is provided in the hoisting frame, and the at least two containers can be transferred between the hoisting frame and the first rack by the transfer means, and

internal transfer means is provided in the hoisting frame for transferring the articles between the at least two containers while reading the article ID tag.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (New) A method of checking inventory in an automated warehouse, comprising the steps of:

placing a container holding an article on a first rack of a transfer apparatus, wherein a container ID tag is attached to the container and an article ID tag is attached to the article;

reading the container ID tag with a first reading while the container is on the first rack;

removing the container from the first rack of the transfer apparatus and placing the container onto a hoisting frame of the transfer apparatus, and

reading the article ID tag while removing the container from the first rack and placing the container onto the hoisting frame.